

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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61

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 RSR-01 OMB-01

AID-20 /106 W

----- 105026

R 181725 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SCSTATE WASHDC 9492

INFO USCINCSO FOR POLAD

DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 3309

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT, MCAP, VE

SUBJECT: MILITARY AND ELECTIONS

1. RECENTLY POLITICAL FORCES OF LEFT AND RIGHT HAVE BEEN SPEAKING OPENLY ON BEHALF OF EXPANDED ROLE FOR MILITARY IN POLITICS. LEFTISTS ARE SAYING MILITARY SHOULD TAKE PART IN ELECTION TO " DEFEND WILL OF PEOPLE." FAR LEFT MAS SEES MILITARY ROLE AS TAKING ARMS AGAINST ENEMIES OF SOCIALISM; NEW FORCE CALLS ON MILITARY TO BACK THEIR CANDIDATE " WHEN" HE WINS. (MILITARY BY LAW CANNOT VOTE OR BELONG TO POLITICAL PARTIES .)

2. HOWEVER THE RIGHT (IN PERSON OF FORMER DEFENSE MINISTER GARCIA VILLASMIL AND OTHERS) ALSO CONTINUES TO CALL FOR EXPANDED MILITARY ROLE IN POLITICS AND IS HINTING AT POSSIBLE COUP AS RESULT OF MILITARY DISILLUSIONMENT WITH CIVILIAN INEPTITUDE AND CORRUPTION. THIS POSSIBILITY, WHICH PEREZ JIMENEZ ALSO FORESEES, HAS BEEN TALKED UP BY RIGHTIST DENOUNCERS OF VOTING MACHINE SCANDAL LIKE FND'S SEGNINI LA CRUZ. EMBASSY HAS NO EVIDENCE OF SUCH EXTREME MILITARY CONCERN. HOWEVER, IT IS INTERESTING THAT PRESIDENT CALDERA APRIL 12, WHILE PUBLICLY PRAISING MILITARY ROLE GUARANTEEING FREE ELECTIONS EMPHASIZED THAT IT IS CIVILIAN SUPREME ELECTORAL COUNCIL WHICH DIRECTS, GUARANTEES, AND CONTROLS ELECTORAL PROCESS.

AIRGRAM FOLLOWS WITH DETAILS.

MCCLINTOCK

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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